

PROCEEDINGS

of a

MILITARY COURT FOR THE
TRIAL OF WAR CRIMINALS

held at

LUNEBURG, GERMANY,

on

MONDAY, 22 OCTOBER, 1945,

upon the trial of

JOSEF KRAMER

and

44 Others.

T H I R T Y F I R S T D A Y .

Transcript of the Official

Shorthand Notes.

Vol. V (37)

(At 0930 hours the Court reassembles pursuant to adjournment, the same President, Members, and Judge Advocate being present).

The accused are again brought before the Court.

CAPT. BROWN: On Saturday morning I concluded all the evidence I wished to call on behalf of Mathes, and I now propose to call the accused Otto Calesson.

THE ACCUSED, OTTO CALESSON takes his stand at the place from which the other witnesses have given their evidence and having been duly sworn is examined by CAPTAIN BROWN as follows:-

- Q What is your full name ? A. Otto Kulesa.
- Q Where and when were you born ? A. On the 4th September 1892 at Rastenburg in East Prussia.
- Q I believe you are married and have three children ? A. Yes.
- Q When did you join the German army ? A. On the 23rd May 1944.
- Q Did you volunteer ? A. No, conscripted on the 23rd May.
- Q Where did you go then ? A. About the 15th June I went to Struthof.
- Q What did you do there ? A. Training there up to the 10th September 1944.
- Q And then where did you go ? A. On the 15th September I was transferred with another 104 men to Mittelbau concentration camp.
- Q Were you then transferred to the SS ? A. On the 16th I was transferred to the SS.
- Q Where did you go on the 16th ? A. To Northausen.
- Q How were you employed at Northausen ? A. I was in charge of the machines there - working at the concentration camp for the requisitioning of machines and for the administration of them at Mittelbau.
- THE PRESIDENT: What machines ? A. For mines - mining machinery.
- CAPT. BROWN: Were you ever employed as a guard in the Dora concentration camp ? A. I had nothing to do with the camp.
- Q When did you leave Northausen ? A. On the 4th April 1945, in the evening.
- Q Where did you go ? A. I went back to Dora with the remainder of the machines, but I was told there by Obersturmfuhrer Moser that we were going to Neuengamme concentration camp.
- Q Did you travel on the first train for Neuengamme ? A. Yes.
- Q Did you arrive at Neuengamme ? A. No, we did not arrive in Neuengamme but had to continue to Bergen-Belsen.
- Q When did you arrive at Bergen-Belsen ? A. On the 10th April.

- Q Were you in charge of the train ? A. Oberscharfuhrer Hartwig was in charge of the train.
- Q Did you travel in a coach with some of the prisoners ? A. No, I had a coach for myself because I had several instruments with me.
- Q What type of instruments ? A. Levelling instruments, compasses, and all sorts of other utensils necessary for levelling work.
- Q When you arrived at Bergen-Belsen where did you go ? A. To Bergen.
- Q What block did you go to at Bergen ? A. 83, 87, 85.
- Q What were your duties in that camp ? A. I was put in charge of block 88, and the first day was spent with trying to accomodate 600 prisoners in this block.
- Q What did you do in the next few days ? A. I went for walks.
- Q Were you detailed to assist in cleaning up that camp ? A. I did not get a direct order. I was not detailed, but there was plenty of cinder lying about so I gave an order to the prisoners to try and get rid of this cinder and their work would be finished when they had done that.
- Q I am now going to refer to the evidence against you. Firstly, volume 13, page 25, the evidence of Zamoski. You remember the witness Zamoski in court ? A. Yes.
- Q He stated that you were in charge of the transport that he travelled in, and that he asked you for some water and you replied "You can get some water with my pistol". Did any such incident ever happen ? A. No.
- Q He went on to say that in one waggon there were 190 men and by the time you arrived at Belsen more than half of those men had died. What have you to say about that ? A. That is not true.
- Q He also said that you stood at the door of a block and beat people; is that true ? A. No.
- Q I am now going to refer to the deposition of Jekel Gutman, page 30. The court will remember that he corroborated Zamoski's affidavit which was put in. I propose to refer to paragraph 4 of that affidavit. (To the witness) You have seen the affidavit of Zamoski ? A. Yes.
- Q Are the statements that he makes in paragraph 4 in that affidavit correct ? A. It is not true.
- Q The next deposition I refer to is that of Muller, page 109, exhibit 64. You have seen the affidavit of Muller ? A. Yes.
- Q He makes certain statements in paragraph 2 regarding a journey from Dora to Belsen, and he refers to you shooting a man who was trying to get some carrots. What have you to say about that ? A. I do not know anything about it.
- Q In paragraph 3 he says that you beat a number of prisoners who were going out of block 87 to clean up the roads. What have you to say about that ? A. The first thing is there were no roads to be cleaned because they were clean in Belsen. The second thing is I had nothing to do with block 87 at all. I was in charge of 88 and I had no say about people in 87.

Q I now refer to the deposition of Raschiner, page 119, exhibit 71, paragraph 2. He states that he arrived at Belsen from Dora about the 2nd April, and that you were in charge of his transport and that you shot a man who was trying to get some water. A. On the 2nd April I was not in Belsen. I was in Northausen. It was Easter Monday and I was at church that day.

Q He also says that 10 prisoners who had died during the journey were taken from the lorries and left lying there. During your journey to Belsen did you at any point travel in lorries? A. No.

Q Have you ever shot any prisoners? A. No.

Q Have you ever hit prisoners with an iron bar? A. No.

Q Have you ever ill-treated prisoners? A. No, I have not ill-treated prisoners, but once when an officer from the Wehrmacht wanted to inspect block 88, I just wanted to make sure that everything was clean and tidy, and I saw that one room of that block was not clean. So I took a broom and I showed them that they must clean under the beds as well, and I hit one on his backside.

Q Did you hit any of them so seriously as to injure them or cause their death? A. No.

Q Was Oberscharfuhrer Bentwick in charge of Block 87? A. Yes.

MAJOR WINWOOD: No cross-examination.

MAJOR MUNRO: No questions.

MAJOR CRANFIELD: No questions.

CAPT. ROBERTS: No questions.

Cross-examined by CAPTAIN FIELDEN

Q When did you first see that man at Belsen? (Indicating No.25, Franz Stofel)? A. When we were all arrested.

Q Did he ever go into camp No.1?

THE PRESIDENT: I cannot see how he can tell us that.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: It is a matter for you, but I have never found any court being convinced by some gentleman on oath swearing to the movements of some other person for a matter of twenty-four hours over a period of several days.

CAPT. FIELDEN: I will leave that.

CAPT. CORBALLY: No questions.

CAPT. NEAVE: No questions.

CAPT. PHILLIPS: No questions.

LT. BOYD: No questions.

CAPT. MUNRO: No questions.

LT. JEDRZEJOWICZ: No questions.

Cross-examined by COLONEL BACKHOUSE

- Q Where did you say you went to get your training ? A. About 1912.
- Q You told us to-day that you went in May of 1944 and that you were training. I want to know where that was ? A. A town in East Prussia called Prussian Holland.
- Q How long did you stay at that place ? A. Until 15th June.
- Q Where did you go on the 15th June ? A. To ~~Strutthof~~.
- Q Another name for Strutthof is Natzweiler, is not it ? A. No, that is another Strutthof that lies in the vicinity of Danzig.
- Q Was that a concentration camp too ? A. Yes.
- Q What were your duties there ? A. I instructed people there.
- Q When you left Dora what was your rank ? A. Sergeant.
- Q Were you an Oberscharfuhrer when you reached Belsen ? A. Yes.
- Q Who was the senior, you or Hartwie ? A. Both equal.
- Q On this train in which you left Dora, what food did the prisoners have ? A. Each one had a loaf of bread or one and a half loaves and one kilo of meat.
- Q Where did you get all this meat from ? A. From Dora.
- Q You were not in the habit of giving prisoners meat at Dora, were you ? A. Each prisoner when he left Dora got two blankets, one loaf of bread or one and a half loaves of bread, and one kilogramme of meat.
- Q Did the Jews get any ? A. Everybody.
- Q Had you some prisoners from the smaller camps round Dora on that transport ? A. I do not know; when I was ready there were two transports waiting there and I went with the first one. What happened with the second I do not know.
- Q What arrangements were made for water on the journey ? A. The water situation was very bad. We had no water ourselves, and whenever we stopped on our journey and tried to get some water from the houses round about the answer was always: "There is no water" because the waterworks were destroyed.
- Q The journey took five days according to you; is that right ? A. Five or six days. We arrived on the 10th.
- Q Did the prisoners get any water at all on that journey ? A. When there was some water in some ditches they got that water, because we ourselves had to drink some water out of ditches.
- Q Did the train stop once or twice by the side of the road ? A. It stopped very often.
- Q How often did you allow the prisoners out of the train ? A. It was not my job and I was not in charge. Oberscharfuhrer Hartwie had the possibility to let the prisoners out.

- Q How often were the prisoners allowed out ? A. When we stopped anywhere for a long period they left the train.
- Q How many waggons were there on the train ? A. I do not know.
- Q About how many ? A. Perhaps 35.
- Q How many prisoners did you cram into each ? A. They sat quite nicely and comfortable, about 100 in each waggon, but they were double waggons so they could sit.
- Q And you had one to yourself, did you ? A. Yes, with the instruments.
- Q Were the prisoners famished by the time you got there ? A. They were very hungry, yes, but it was not our fault. It was the fault of the railway, because in Bergsdorf there was for each prisoner food prepared - 750 grammes of bread, 250 grammes of sausage, and 100 grammes of butter, but we did not wait so that the food could not be distributed, and the whole lot went back to Neuengamme concentration camp.
- Q How many SS men had you on the train ? A. 124.
- Q When the train stopped what precautions did you take to see the prisoners did not escape ? A. In each waggon there were four SS men and they were responsible for their prisoners, and when the prisoners left there was a chain of SS guards put round the train.
- Q Were you and Hartwig the two senior men on the train ? A. There was still another Hauptscharfuhrer from a guard company and he was responsible for the security of the whole train. I do not remember his name.
- Q Why was not he in charge if he was senior to both Hartwig and you ? A. Because he did not belong to our command, and the man responsible for the transport was detailed by our own commandant. This Hauptscharfuhrer did not belong to that command.
- Q Do you remember on the third day after you had started the train pulling up and the prisoners being allowed out ? A. I do not remember that because the train stopped very often. It stopped everyday.
- Q Do you remember some of the prisoners beginning to pick carrots up ? A. I do not know. I have not been outside during all this.
- Q Do you remember any occasion when the prisoners did begin to pick carrots up at the roadside ? A. I do not know. We were in the middle of the road and there were no carrots there at all. That is quite clear. There were no carrots.
- Q I suggest to you that on the third day when some of these starving prisoners tried to pick some carrots by the side of the railway you shot one of them and killed him ? A. No, that is not true, because on the third day they cannot have been very hungry, because they still had some bread left from their one loaf or one and a half loaves, and they must have still had some meat left. Apart from that, it was never my habit to shoot prisoners who were without weapons.
- Q Do you remember Zamoski on the transport ? A. I do not know Zamoski, and it is hardly believable that Zamoski was on the transport with me, because he was in block number 69.

- Q Do you remember any prisoner coming and asking you for water ? A. I remember many prisoners asking me for water and I gave them water - even hot water - because I asked the engine driver for some water and that is the only thing that I got - hot water - and I distributed as much as I could get.
- Q Quite a lot of prisoners died on that journey, did not they ? A. No, only very few.
- Q What is your idea of very few ? A. I do not know, because at one station another transport of 1700 women joined us and they had already some dead. Then Hartwig told me that at a station some other dead prisoners were lying and they belonged also to another transport which he had to receive with ours.
- Q People were dying on all these transports were they ? A. Well, now and again people died, yes, that is true; but out of our transport consisting of about 5,000 prisoners, 42 had died.
- Q Was your transport about 5,000 ? A. Yes, approximately 5,000.
- Q If you had about 35 trucks and you took one for yourself, you must have had an awful job to distribute the others at 100 a truck, had not you ?
- A. The 1700 women came already with their own train, in their own waggons
- Q You remember when you arrived at the station at Bergen-Belsen ? A. Yes.
- Q Were the prisoners paraded in hundreds ? A. I do not know. That was not my duty. That was the duty of Hartwig.
- Q You were there; you could see what was happening, could not you ? A. I unloaded my own waggon and took my bicycle and went.

- Q There were some bicycles on this train, were there ? A I had my own bicycle.
- Q When you got to the station there were piles of carrots just on the other side of the line, were there not ? A I do not know.
- Q Do you remember No. 14, Schmitz ? A Yes.
- Q Was he on that transport ? A I do not know.
- Q He told us that there were piles of carrots there on the far side of the line is that right ? A It is possible; I do not know.
- Q Did you not go up with the prisoners to the camp ? A I took my bicycle and went to the station because I wanted to know how to get to Neuengamme, because my intention was to go from Neuengamme to Berlin.
- Q But were you not in the least interested in the welfare of the prisoners ? A I had nothing to do either with the transport or with the prisoners; that was not my job, so therefore I was not interested.
- Q But you had been looking after the prisoners, had you not, because you were the kind man who went to the engine driver and got the hot water for them ? A Yes. They asked me whether I could get them some water, so I got them the hot water. I said: "Well, that is all I can get", so they were quite satisfied and drank this hot water and put some salt in it.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: Colonel Backhouse, would it worry you to question him about this hot water out of the engine because it rather intrigues me. Would you ask him to give a demonstration in words as to how it was done ?

COLONEL BACKHOUSE: Yes. (To the witness): Can you explain to the Court how you got this hot water out of the engine ? A I went to the engine driver and told him that I needed some water for drinking, so he said: "I have no water for drinking, but if you like I will let you have some hot water", so I said: "All right, it is better than nothing", so he turned on the tap inside the engine and then that is how I got some hot water.

- Q What did you put it in ? A In a small container, containing about 8 to 10 litres; a sort of small bucket.
- Q Where did the engine get the water from on this six day journey if there was no water ? A On the railway stations, because whenever an engine was exchanged then the new engine was ready, including water of course.
- Q Why did you not get water for the prisoners then ? A No, that was not possible, because the amount of water was very small, even at the railway stations, although they had all their own water works, so that even the necessary amount for engines was difficult to be obtained.
- Q How many rivers and streams did you pass on this journey ? A Very many.
- Q Then why on earth did you not stop the train and get some water for these people who were dying from thirst ? A That is impossible, that anybody should stop the train, because the engine driver has his own time table and it is impossible that somebody should simply interfere with that and tell him to stop.
- Q But this train kept on stopping. Another stop would not make any difference, would it ? A If the train stopped in the neighbourhood of a ditch or a small river, of course we fetched water, but most of the time the train stopped entirely in the open where we did not find anything at all.
- Q Let us come to the time when you got to Belsen station. I suggest to you that when you arrived at that station your starving prisoners broke across

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- the line and tried to get at that pile of carrots ? A I do not know.
I told you already I do not know whether there were piles of carrots or not.
- Q And that you pulled out your pistol and shot and wounded one of them in the leg ? A I do not know anything about it. I was in charge every day of 8,000 prisoners. If I wanted to beat anybody or shoot anybody I would have had plenty of opportunity to do that.
- Q Well, I am going to suggest to you that you not only had the opportunity, but you took it. When were you in charge of these 8,000 prisoners ?
A From September, 1944, until April, 1945.
- Q Was that when you were at Dora or Nordhausen ? A Nordhausen.
- Q You were in charge of 8,000 prisoners ? A Yes.
- Q Then why did you tell the Court you had nothing to do with the camp, that your duties were requisitioning and administering machinery ? (The witness starts to answer in German). That is not an answer at all to the question I asked you. What I want to know is why did you tell the Court that you had nothing to do with the camp, that your duties were requisitioning and administering machinery, and now you tell us you were in fact in charge of 8,000 prisoners whom you could have shot and beaten if you wanted to. A They were working in the mines and at the same time learning the job. (The Interpreter: The witness enumerated B.11, 2,000 and B.12, 2,500 and so on until he came to 8,000).
- Q And you were in charge of them ? A I was in charge in instructing them to use the machines.
- Q I suggest to you that your original evidence to the Court that you were in charge of requisitioning and administering the machines and had nothing to do with the camp was a deliberate attempt to mislead the Court ?
A My opinion is that I had nothing to do with the camp or with anything inside the camp.
- Q Let us come back to Bergen-Belsen again. Who did you report to when you got up to the camp ? A Not at all, because my superior authority is in Berlin.
- Q Who did you report to when you got up to the camp ? A I reported to Obersturmführer Hoessler who was my superior officer.
- Q He put you in charge of several blocks, did he not ? A No, Oberscharführer Hartwie did that.
- Q Did he not put you in charge of several blocks, including block 87 ? A No.
- Q And did he not tell you to go round the blocks and see that everything was all right ? A No.
- Q Let me remind you of what he said himself when he came and gave evidence in the witness box. "I kept this man, No. 19, with me and gave him the orders to see that everything should be all right round the blocks, that he should see to it that everything was all right". That is at page 21 of volume 22. Do you remember your own counsel putting this to him: "It has been stated in evidence that this man was in charge of block 87; is that correct", and the answer was: "He was in charge not only of one single block; he was responsible for several blocks" ? A I know that Hoessler said it, but it is wrong.
- Q Where did you report to Hoessler ? A I did not report myself. It was Hartwie who reported the whole transport and reported my presence as well.

- Q But you were not with them - you had gone off on your bicycle ?
A When I returned to the camp.
- Q As a matter of fact, Hoessler met you at the station did he not ?
A I have not seen Hoessler at the station.
- Q Was not one of the first jobs that you had to do when you got to the camp to put your men into your four blocks ? A No. Hartwie told me that he is now Rapportfuhrer and he is responsible for the distribution of the blocks. I would be put in charge of 88, Bentwick would be put in charge of 87 and - I do not know - Kaufman or Richter of block 85.
- Q Let me remind you of what Hoessler, your Commanding Officer, said about it. "When Calesson first arrived at Belsen with his transport, was one of his jobs to see his men into a block ? (A) Yes; they were divided into several blocks; I believe four". Now let me remind you of what Zamoski said: "On arrival at Belsen we were detailed to our various blocks. Calesson stood at the door of my block and beat prisoners, who were too weak to move quickly, with an iron bar". Did you stand at the door of the block, to begin with, putting people in ? (The witness starts to answer in German). I am not asking you about the number of the block. I am asking you: Did you or did you not stand at the door of the block seeing men in ? A No.
- Q He goes on to say: "Many men fell down and I know that some of them were so seriously injured that they had to be taken to hospital the next morning".
A He says also that there were some nurses in the hospital ----
- Q Never mind what he also says. What I want to know is this. Is it not a fact that a lot of these men were taken to hospital ? A I do not know.
- Q Do you remember a man called Leibl Maidan ? A No.
- Q I put it to you that you killed him that day by hitting him on the head with an iron bar ? A I would not dream of hitting somebody with an iron bar.
- Q Do you remember Gutermann ? A I do not know him.
- Q He was with Zamoski and says precisely the same thing. Now you told us you spent the next two or three days going for walks. Do you really mean that ? A Nobody was able to give me any sort of jobs because I did not belong to that company at all, so nobody had opportunity to detail me to anything.
- Q Kramer and Hoessler were so short of men they were trying to borrow them, were they not ? A No. We had so many S.S. people that on the 12th or 13th we had to send them away; a big part of them had to be sent away. Even when the British troops arrived, quite a number of these S.S. men, for instance, Bentwick, Kaufman and Richter, I do not know all their names, they escaped; even when the British troops arrived already they still escaped.
- Q Were you not told by Hoessler to tidy the roads up before, because he wanted the place clean when the British troops arrived ? A The roads were clean.
- Q That was not what I asked you. Were you told by Hoessler to see that the place was tidied up and that the paper which was lying about and so on, was cleaned up, cleared away ? A No.
- Q Then everything Hoessler has told us about you is untrue, is it ?
A I do not know.
- Q Did you start wearing a white armband ? A Yes.
- Q And did you not go into block 87 and order all the Jews to go outside and start cleaning up the road ? A I said already that I had nothing to do with block 87; that was under the command of Oberscharfuhrer Bentwick.

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- Q And did you not stand by the door and as the Prisoners went out you beat them on the head and the body with your stick ? A I have not been in block 87, that was not my responsibility.
- Q Did you behave in this way in block 88 ? A I have not beaten anybody in block 88. I do not know who was beating and I do not know where, but nobody in block 88 was beaten.
- Q You kept a broomstick; where was that ? A I do not call that beating at all. I told them to sweep the place and I just hit them with a broomstick and they laughed about it.
- Q What do you call beating ? A I call it beating if he gets some marks, either if he has a wound or has some bruises.
- Q That is what you call a beating in a concentration camp, is it ? A Yes.
- Q The instruments you say you brought up with you from Nordhausen, were they surveying instruments ? A Compasses and levelling instruments and so on.
- Q Had you some steel levelling rods amongst them ? Had you some steel rods ? A Yes.
- Q Let us put it more simply. Had you not got a steel rod amongst the things you brought up with you ? A No.
- Q Are you sure you had not got one in your hand when you got up to the block to put the prisoners in ? A No.

CAPTAIN BROWN: No re-examination.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: Calsson, if I understand this journey correctly, 3,500 men had to be moved by train over five days; is that right ? A I do not know. We must have been more, because we started in Dora with 2,900 and then another transport of 1,700 came and a third smaller transport. Where the third came from I do not know.

- Q How many people do you say there were on the train ? A I do not know exactly the number, but certainly more than 4,600, because apart from these a few smaller transports joined us.
- Q Were they in closed trucks or open trucks ? A Those trucks of our transport were open and the trucks with the 1,700 women were closed trucks. They were covered with canvas.
- Q You say 42 died on the journey you think ? A Yes, that is what I understand - 42 when we arrived in Bergen.
- Q What was causing their deaths, do you think ? A I do not know. They might have been sick when they boarded the trains.
- Q Out of the transport you started with yourself they were pretty fit men, were they not ? A The majority of them were fit men.
- Q And how many of those died on this comparatively short journey of five days ? A I do not know.
- Q You do not think that to lose 42 people in a journey of that kind is extraordinary at all ? A If they belonged to my transport that would be a very big number indeed, but as I said before they did not belong to my transports and I heard from Hartwie that at a station were loaded also a few bodies.

- Q Do I understand you to be telling the Court that when somebody died on this journey you carried the corpse with you to Belsen? Is that what you say?
- A Yes, we took all the bodies with us.
- Q Why do you want to take the dead and the living together on a journey of five days?
- A We could not leave the bodies just on the open road or on the rails.
- Q And when somebody died, what happened to the body, was it moved to some particular waggon on the train, or was it just left with the living in the place where it died?
- A No, they were moved into another waggon.
- Q So if you be accurate you arrived at Belsen with a truck full of dead people; is that right?
- A I understand that there were 42.
- Q Who had occupied this waggon that you used for the dead before you filled it up with the 42 unfortunate people who had died on the journey?
- A Nobody. That was an open truck covered with canvas.
- Q Did you ever feel worried as to whether, when you got to Belsen, somebody might ask why so many as 42 people had died on this journey, or did you feel that when you got there nobody would bother at all and it really did not matter and you had no responsibility at all?
- A That was the duty of the man in charge of the transport, Hartwie, and he, I believe, also reported that when we arrived, the number of the dead, and they were loaded into trucks.
- Q Are you an old soldier?
- A Yes.
- Q Are you much more of a soldier than the man Hartwie?
- A I do not know about Hartwie, but I have been a soldier in 1912 and I have taken part in the last war.
- Q And did the man who was in charge of the train never come and ask you what you thought you ought to do about it to stop these deaths which were occurring on this journey?
- A No, Hartwie never asked me.

THE PRESIDENT: You have told us about the train rations. You said that there was one to one and a quarter loaves of bread and a kilo of meat, and that in addition at, I think, Bergsdorf there was some butter and some bread you should have been issued with and some more meat. Can you explain why those train rations are so much superior to the rations we have been told about that were issued in concentration camps?

A All of us, the soldiers and the prisoners, received exactly the same rations when we left the camp, and then after two or three days, of course, we had nothing to eat and maybe people knew that we were hungry. This place which I mentioned is about 7 kilometres from Neuengamme, so when we stopped there Hartwie, who was in charge of the transport, went to the camp and told the Commandant about our food situation and as a result these rations were then sent.

- Q That is not an answer to my question at all. What I want to know is this. Can you explain why these train rations and the ration that was waiting for the prisoners was on such a far higher scale than the normal ration issued in concentration camps?

A Because our journey should have taken another two or three days until we arrived in Bergen-Belsen.

A MEMBER OF THE COURT: You said that at Dora or Nordhausen you were responsible for, amongst other things, instructing 8,000 prisoners in the use of machinery. What kind of machinery was that. (The witness gave an answer in German).

THE INTERPRETER: I am afraid I cannot understand.

COLONEL BACKHOUSE: I think it may help if he were asked: Was it mining machinery?

(The question was put to the witness).

THE WITNESS: Yes.

THE MEMBER: Had you any particular qualifications for teaching people?
A Yes, that is my profession.

THE PRESIDENT: Have you any questions to ask on that, Captain Brown.

CAPTAIN BROWN: I would like to clear up the question of the rations.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

CAPTAIN BROWN: Were the rations at Nordhausen better than in other concentration camps?

A What they got in the camp I do not know, but in addition to their normal rations they got from the works where they were working the

following additional rations per month: 650 grammes sausage or meat;

200 grammes margarine; 125 grammes Butter; 250 grammes rice, and about

500 grammes of porridge and three kilogrammes of bread per week. But

that was only for those who were underground, and that was for heavy workers.

(The accused leaves the place from

which he has given his evidence).

CAPT. BROWN: The last accused whom I represent is No.21, Karl Egersdorf. This man is charged on the Belsen charge only, and I propose to put him in the box to give his evidence.

The Accused KARL EGERSDORF takes his stand at the place from which the other witnesses have given their evidence and, having been duly sworn, is examined by CAPT. BROWN as follows:

Q. What is your full name? A. Karl Egersdorf.

Q. Where and when were you born? A. 20th July 1902 in Rosenbach.

Q. I believe you are married and have one child.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: Where is Rosenbach? A. In Bavaria. I am married and have one child.

CAPT. BROWN: Were you a member of the Bavarian People's Party, which is a Catholic movement? A. Yes.

Q. When did you join the S.S.? A. On the 30th March 1941.

Q. Where did you go then? A. To Auschwitz.

Q. Did you wish to join the S.S. of the concentration camp service? A. No, I was conscripted.

Q. Which camp were you in at Auschwitz? A. Auschwitz No.1.

Q. What was your job there? A. Working in the cookhouse.

Q. When did you leave Auschwitz? A. 21st January 1945.

Q. When did you arrive in Belsen? A. I cannot tell exactly; the 7th or 8th April 1945.

Q. How were you employed at Belsen? A. I was sent to the food store as an assistant.

Q. Of what did the food store consist? A. There was bread, meat, flour and other foodstuffs.

Q. And was the vegetable store part of the same store? A. No, that was about 300 metres away from it.

CAPT. BROWN: I propose to refer to Affidavit No.1, Exhibit 16. (To the witness) You have seen the affidavit of Dora Almaleh? A. Yes.

Q. And the statement that in April in Belsen you shot a Hungarian girl? A. I have seen that.

Q. What have you to say about that? A. It is not true.

Q. Was there a girl called Dora employed in your stores? A. Yes.

Q. Did she come from Salonika? A. Yes.

Q. Do you think that may be the same girl has made that statement? A. Yes, I think so.

Q. What makes you think that? A. The girl did not work and therefore I dismissed her.

Q. When did you dismiss her? A. Two days before the British troops arrived.

Q. Did you ever shoot anyone? A. No.

Q. Did you ever illtreat any of the prisoners? A. Not a single one.

CAPT. BROWN: I now propose to ask some questions with regard to the accused Mathes. (To the witness) Where did you sleep at Belsen? A. In the bathhouse.

Q. Was the accused Mathes employed in the bathhouse? A. Yes.

Q. Can you say from your own knowledge that he was employed in the bathhouse right up to the 15th April?

COL. BACKHOUSE: That is very leading.

CAPT. BROWN: I am cross-examining.

COL. BACKHOUSE: You cannot cross-examine your own witness.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: You cannot cross-examine somebody you are appearing for. That is quite impossible.

THE PRESIDENT: You can frame your question differently, not as a leading question.

CAPT. BROWN: Do you know when he ceased to be employed in the bathhouse? A. I do not know.

Q. Do you know if he was still employed there when the British arrived? A. He was there in the morning and at night.

CAPT. BROWN: That concludes my examination.

(The remaining defending officers do not desire to cross-examine this witness)

Cross-examined by COL. BACKHOUSE.

Q. You were at Auschwitz altogether for nearly four years; is that right? A. Yes.

Q. Which cookhouse were you working in? A. There was only one kitchen in Auschwitz No.1.

Q. Then where did you go in January 1945? A. To Belsen.

Q. In January 1945? A. We were on our way with a column of trucks; we were sent to Berlin first and then we went to Belsen.

Q. Where did you spend the time between 21st January and 7th or 8th April? A. 14 days we spent in Lytchtelwerdt and five weeks we were in Reichenberg.

Q. Anywhere else? A. No.

Q. You are a few weeks short, but I daresay your time is not very accurate. Are you sure you did not get to Belsen earlier? A. I cannot tell the day exactly.

Q. You have only accounted for seven weeks from the 21st January up to now. A. Yes, because it took us some time with the trucks to reach these places.

Q. Who came with you? A. We were ten trucks; in my truck was a driver and another S S. man.

Q. Who was the other S.S. man? A. I do not know his name, because he stayed in Weillen.

Q. How long did you travel with him? A. All the time.

Q. And never found out what his name was? A. I have known it, but I cannot remember.

- Q. Then when you arrived at Belsen were you in charge of the bread part of the stores? A. Yes...
- Q. Whereabouts were the foodstores? A. The foodstore was the first hut as we entered the camp.
- Q. Was it the first hut on the left as you went in? A. Yes.
- Q. And there was a very large pile of vegetables just by the camp gate, was not there? A. Yes.
- Q. Very close to your bread store? A. The bread store was also near the vegetable store.
- Q. That is what I was rather suggesting, that the vegetable store and the bread store are quite close to each other, are not they? A. They were in one block.
- Q. That is the bread store and the vegetable store? A. Yes.
- Q. I thought you said it was about 300 metres away when answering your own counsel. A. The foodstore and the vegetable store.
- Q. I am not following you. Are you saying the bread store is a different place to the food store? A. No, not the same place.

THE PRESIDENT: I think actually the answer to your question should have been yes. You said: "Are you saying they are not the same?", and he said: "No, not the same place."

COL. BACKHOUSE: You are saying the bread store was not in the same place as the food store, are you? A. No, they are not in the same block.

Q. But you were in charge of the bread store, were not you? A. I was responsible for the food store and the bread store was a part of the food store.

Q. I am not a bit worried about the food store. What I am worrying about is the bread store.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: My note is in a muddle. What I have is this: "At Belsen I was employed at the food store. The food store consisted of meat, flour and other foodstuffs. The vegetable store was about 300 metres away and separate."

COL. BACKHOUSE: Yes.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: What is he saying now?

COL. BACKHOUSE: What he is saying now is that the food store was not the same place as the bread store; that the bread store was close to the vegetable store, was in the same block, and that he was in charge of both. (To the witness) Of course you know that Dora Almaleh said it was whilst she was working at the bread store and you were working at the vegetable store she saw you shoot this person, do not you? Do you know that is what she said? A. Yes, she said so.

Q. And you know that those two stores are in the same block, do not you? A. Yes.

Q. Then why when your counsel put that to you did you say: "The vegetable store was 300 metres away from the foodstore." It was quite misleading, was not it? A. Yes.

Q. You were trying to suggest to the court that this girl could not see you because she was 300 metres away, were not you?

CAPT. BROWN: I am afraid I must object to that question. I did not get that impression at all.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: Will you tell the court what the objection is and then we will deal with it.

CAPT. BROWN: The prosecutor seems to be putting it to the accused that he gave a completely misleading answer, and he started by saying that it was while the accused was working in the bread store that this incident happened. What happened was, the affidavit says she recognised the man as having been in charge of the bread store, but that she saw him appearing in the street near the vegetable store. I do not see that the prosecutor has got the right to put it to the accused ~~he~~ was trying to be misleading, because I do not think he was.

COL. BACKHOUSE: What I am perfectly entitled to do is to suggest to a witness that he is not telling the truth and is deliberately misleading. Whether my friend thinks so or not is neither here nor there. It is a matter for the court to decide. But if I am going to make the comment afterwards I must make the suggestion.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: It misled me on my note, because I have it wrong.

COL. BACKHOUSE: I think it is obvious it was misleading, and I suggest it was deliberate. If I am going to make that comment later I must put it in cross-examination.

THE PRESIDENT: I am perfectly convinced, unless there was a mistake in the interpreting, he originally said that the vegetable store was 300 metres away from the food store.

COL. BACKHOUSE: Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: And he then agrees the vegetable store and bread store were in the same block, having said that the food store dealt with bread, meat and flour.

COL. BACKHOUSE: Yes. He still said his ^{food} store was 300 metres away and his bread department was in the vegetable store, in the same block. But what I am putting is when he volunteered the information that the bread store and food store were 300 metres apart he knew perfectly well we were talking about the bread store, and was deliberately misleading the court, and he did it with a view to misleading the court.

THE PRESIDENT: It was, of course, a direct question that he was asked. He did not volunteer that information.

(At the request of the court the shorthand writer reads the following: "Q. How were you employed at Belsen? A. I was sent to the food store as an assistant. Q. Of what did the food store consist? A. There was bread, meat, flour and other foodstuffs. Q. And was the vegetable store part of the same store? A. No, that was about 300 metres away from it.")

COL. BACKHOUSE: (To the witness) Were you not trying to give the court the impression that the bread store and the vegetable store were a long way away from each other? A. My bread store and vegetable store were in one block.

Q. Was food very short indeed by the time you got to Belsen? A. Yes.

Q. How often did you get any bread into the bread store? A. Once.

Q. Where did it come from? A. I do not know exactly, I believe from the wehrmacht barracks.

Q. Were the prisoners regularly dying of starvation by that time? A. The prisoners got not enough food.

Q. Were not the prisoners dying regularly by that time, in hundreds? A. Yes.

Q. Did prisoners try and steal food? A. Yes.

- Q. What did you do when you caught prisoners trying to steal food? A. I took it away from them.
- Q. Is that all you did? A. Yes.
- Q. A lot of other people were beating prisoners for trying to take even peelings, were not they? A. I have not seen one single case.
- Q. Did not you see any beating at all in Belsen? A. No, I have not seen it.
- Q. I suppose you never saw it in Auschwitz either? A. Yes, I saw it in Auschwitz.
- Q. Of course no charge has been made against you in respect of Auschwitz, has it? A. No.
- Q. And you never saw anybody beaten at all in Belsen? A. No, I have not seen it.
- Q. Do you remember in the last few days at Belsen the prisoners being made to drag the corpses away to the big pit that was dug for them? A. Yes.
- Q. Did they come quite near to your bread store? A. Yes, they came near my bread store.
- Q. And you never saw anybody beaten at all? A. No, I have not seen it.
- Q. Did you hear Mr. Druillencoc's evidence here in this court? A. Yes, I heard it.
- Q. Did you hear his account of that dreadful procession? A. Yes.
- Q. And you never saw a single case of beating? A. I was not in the bread store, I was in the food store.

THE PRESIDENT: Do you think he has got that question right?

COL. BACKHOUSE: What he means is although they went past the bread store he was in the food store. (To the witness) Where was the food store?
A. The first hut left of the entrance.

- Q. That was actually in the men's compound, was not it? A. Yes, in the men's compound.
- Q. Did you see this procession? A. Yes.
- Q. It went on all day for days, did not it? A. I do not know whether it lasted all day, but I saw several times looking out on the street people dragging corpses.
- Q. Who fetched the food from the foodstore? A. We took it on carts to the kitchens.
- Q. Who was in charge of kitchen No.4? A. I do not know.
- Q. You handed out the food to the kitchens? You took it there in carts, did not you? A. No, the prisoners were taking the carts to the kitchens.
- Q. You supervised it? A. We loaded the cart and then the prisoners took the cart away to the kitchen.
- Q. You know where the bathhouse was where you slept, do not you? A. Yes.
- Q. There was a kitchen immediately opposite that, was not there? A. Yes.
- Q. That was kitchen No.4, was not it? A. I do not know exactly whether that was Kitchen No.4
- Q. Let us call it kitchen No.4. Do not worry about the number. Who was in charge of that kitchen immediately opposite the bathhouse?

- A. I cannot remember his name; it was a scharfuhrer.
- Q. Then the S.S. kitchen was just round the corner from it, was not it? A. Yes.
- Q. Who was in charge of the S.S. kitchen? A. May.
- Q. You say you slept in the bathhouse? A. Yes.
- Q. Did Melsher and Mathes both sleep in the bathhouse too? A. Melsher was sleeping in the bathhouse; Mathes was sleeping somewhere else, I do not know where.
- Q. And you simply saw them there in the morning when you went out to your work, and you saw them again in the evening when you played cards; is that right?
- A. Yes, I saw them in the morning and at night, but not during the day time.
- Q. Quite a lot of the S.S. left on the 11th or 12th, did not they? A. Yes.
- Q. And that was about the same time these processions were started to clean up the camp? A. They were already dragging corpses when I arrived in Belsen.
- Q. You were getting pretty short of S.S. men, were not you, after the main body left? A. Yes, but there were wehrmacht and Bavarians.
- Q. In those last few days everybody had to lend a hand, did not they, who could? A. I think so.
- Q. Now I want just to deal with this incident about Almaleh. If you saw somebody taking bread from the kitchen did you really only just go and take it away from them? A. I have never seen anybody taking bread away, because I never was in the bread store.
- Q. Well, never mind whether you ever went into the bread store; you were in charge of it, were not you? A. There was an aufscherin in the bread store.
- Q. Who was the aufscherin in the bread store? A. Charlotte Klein. (No. 36)
- Q. And she was under your orders, was not she? A. Yes.
- Q. You were in fact in charge of the bread store, were not you? A. Yes, I was in charge of the bread store, but I was not working there.
- Q. Up to now nobody has suggested you were. What I am suggesting to you is this, that on a day in April you came into the street just as a girl came out of the bread store with some bread, and that you asked the girl what she was doing there, that she said: "I am hungry", and began to run away. Is not that true?
- A. I have not seen the girl with bread.
- Q. And then that you shot her. A. That is not true.
- Q. There was quite a lot of shooting going on those last few days, was not there?
- A. Yes, in the last two days.
- Q. And there was quite a bit of shooting going on before the last two days, was not there? A. No, there was not much shooting.
- Q. There was quite a lot of shooting round the kitchens, was not there? A. I do not know.
- Q. Where was the shooting that you mentioned going on then? A. It was mostly near the quarters of the guards.
- Q. I suggest to you that it was the popular practice there if anybody tried to steal any food, either from the kitchen, the store or elsewhere, if you caught them to shoot them.
- A. I have never seen a case that a girl or a prisoner has been shot.

Re-examined by CAPT. BROWN.

- Q How many cookhouses were there in the men's compound? A. Two.
- Q Do you know the numbers of these cookhouses? A. I believe 1 and 2.
- THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: You were in Belsen for about a week, is that right, before the British came? A. Yes, about a week.
- Q And that was the time when the prisoners were very hungry indeed, was not it? A. They were very hungry.
- Q Under whose orders were you when you were performing these duties? A. Hauptsturmfuhrer Vogler.
- Q Did you not expect that the hungry inmates of Belsen would particularly at that time endeavour to steal any food that was possible? A. Yes.
- Q Did you consider that it would be right if a thief was caught at that time that it should be reported to the commandant so that a proper example should be made of him to deter others? A. No, I do not think so.
- Q Did you get no instructions what you were to do if you caught somebody trying to steal from the food store? A. No, I have not been told anything.
- Q How many thieves do you say you actually caught during that last week? A. There were very few thieves coming in the food store because we had three or four prisoners guarding the door.
- Q Will you answer my question please? How many people were brought to you or you know of who were stealing from the store during the last week? A. I cannot remember a single case exactly from the food store, but I know they were stealing vegetables from next door every day.
- A MEMBER OF THE COURT: Did you carry a revolver or any fire-arms? A. I had a revolver.
- Q Did you carry a stick? A. No, I had no stick.
- THE PRESIDENT: Have you any questions on that?
- CAPT. BROWN: No.

(The accused leaves the place from which he has given his evidence.)

CAPT. BROWN: There is one point upon which I would ask the indulgence of the Court. I have been trying to trace a witness on behalf of this accused and I have got what I might call a clue. I think there is a possibility that I may be able to trace the witness some time this week and I would like to ask the Court if I could call him on behalf of this accused later.

THE PRESIDENT: Have you any objection to that, Col. Backhouse?

COL. BACKHOUSE: I have no objection at all.

THE PRESIDENT: I think the Court fully realise there has been considerable difficulty in getting witnesses so you can produce the witness in due course.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: If it is agreed.

THE PRESIDENT: I think we agreed that from the beginning.

CAPT. FIELDEN: I represent the three accused Pinchen, No. 22; Otto, No. 23; and Stofel, No. 25. They are all included in the Belsen charge only. I propose to call Pinchen to give his evidence.

THE ACCUSED, ANCHOR PINCHEN, takes his stand at the place from which the other witnesses have given their evidence and, having been duly sworn, is examined by CAPT. FIELDEN as follows:-

- Q What is your full name, and how do you spell it? A. Ansgar Pichen.
- Q When and where were you born? A. On the 22nd September, 1913, in Esberg in Denmark.
- Q What nationality was your father when you were born? A. A Dane.
- Q Did you go from Denmark to Upper Silesia in 1914? A. Yes.
- Q What happened there in 1922? A. In 1922 Poland took over Upper Silesia and we became Polish nationals.
- Q When did you first join the German Army? A. On the 25th May, 1940.
- Q Were you conscripted? A. Yes.
- Q Did you become a member of the 102nd Infantry Division? A. Yes.
- Q Were you wounded on the 25th November, 1942? A. Yes.
- Q Was your left hand crippled as a result of that wound? A. Yes.
- Q Will you show your left hand to the Court? (The witness does so.)
- Q Did you go to hospital as a result of that wound? A. Yes.
- Q When did you leave hospital? A. 10th January, 1943.
- Q Where did you go to then? A. Troppau in Moravia.
- Q How long did you stay there? A. Until March, 1943.
- Q Where did you go to then? A. Nowstadt in Silesia.
- Q Where did you go from there? A. To a P.O.W. camp, punishment camp, in Blechhammer, in Upper Silesia.
- COL. BACKHOUSE: I think there is no doubt it is the same place but a different spelling.

- CAPT. FIELDEN: When did you arrive there? A. At the end of March, 1943.
- Q Where did you go to from Blechhammer? A. Then in June, 1944, I came to Dunbrowa in Poland.
- Q When did you leave Dunbrowa? A. In July.
- Q What year? A. 1944.
- Q What happened then? A. I went back to Blechhammer concentration camp.

COL. BACKHOUSE: He said June, did not he?

THE INTERPRETER: He said June and July but I do not think he understands the difference between June and July. I will ask him again.

THE WITNESS: July.

CAPT. FIELDEN: When did you leave Blechhammer? A. 21st January, 1945.

Q Where did you go to from Blechhammer? A. Grossrosen.

Q When did you arrive there? A. On approximately the 20th February, 1945.

Q When did you leave Grossrosen? A. On the 25th February, 1945.

Q Did you leave Grossrosen with any other of the accused? A. Yes, together with Francioh (Accused No.16) and with two others who are not here.

Q Where did you go to from Grossrosen? A. ~~Bergen-Belsen~~

Q When did you arrive there? A. About the 10th March, 1945.

Q What happened when you first arrived at Belsen? A. I was detailed for guard duties but I refused as I was excused guard.

Q Why were you excused guard? A. Because of my hand.

Q Did you join the S.S.? A. They took away my papers and I understood that I should now join the S.S. but whether I had been accepted for service with the S.S. I do not know.

Q Did you ever wear an S.S. uniform? A. No.

Q What was the first work you did? A. On the 27th in the kitchen - cookhouse.

Q Which kitchen was that? A. Kitchen No. 2, as a sort of apprentice so I should learn the job under Unterscharfuhrer Hueskel.

Q What did you do after that? A. After four days I took charge of cookhouse No. 1.

Q How long did you stay in that position? A. Up to the day of my being arrested on the 17th April, 1945.

(At 1300 hours the Court is closed.)

(At 1430 hours the Court is re-opened.)

(The accused are again brought before the Court.)

Q We had arrived at the stage where you were put in charge of No. 1 Kitchen and you said that you stayed there until the liberation of the camp? A. Yes.

Q Did you have a pistol whilst you were at Belsen? A. Yes.

Q Did you carry it whilst you worked in the kitchen? A. No, during my working in the kitchen I did not carry it. I put it into a cupboard, but on the way from the barracks to the kitchen I carried it.

Q Was that cupboard locked? A. Yes.

Q Was the pistol loaded? A. No.

Q What were your duties in the cookhouse? A. I was supervising the cooking.

Q What were your hours of work? A. Once in the morning and once in the afternoon.

THE PRESIDENT: I do not think he has quite followed.

CAPT. FIELDEN: There were two shifts, actually.

THE WITNESS: Either 0300 hours until 1300 hours or in the afternoon from 1300 hours until 2300 hours or mid-night.

CAPT. FIELDEN: Who was in charge of the kitchen when you were not there?

A The second chef, or the second cook; I know only his Christian name. His Christian name is Josef but I do not know his other name.

Q How many internees worked in the kitchen? A. 55.

Q When you arrived at Belzen were any specific orders given to you as to how you were to treat the internees? A. No.

Q Can you describe to the Court the location of the various guards and sentries round Kitchen No. 1? A. The first thing, near the kitchen were the towers, the watchtowers, which were always guarded; then there was ~~one~~ guard at the kitchen, the second guard near the bread stores and the third guard near the other kitchen.

Q How would you describe your relations with the internees working in your kitchen? A. I was on good terms with those internees working for me.

Q Did you ever do anything to help them? A. Yes, I saw that they had been working well and that they were very hungry so I went to the bread stores and saw some bread which was broken, broken loaves of bread, and I brought a number of these broken loaves into the kitchen and distributed them amongst the prisoners.

Q I now refer to the testimony of Sophia Litwinska, Volume 7 of the transcript page 7. Do you remember hearing the testimony of the prosecution witness Sophia Litwinska who made allegations of shooting in the vicinity of kitchen No. 1 on the day when the S.S. men had their parade? A. Yes, I remember.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: Where is this?

CAPT. FIELDEN: This witness did not identify the accused as being implicated in that shooting, but I think the prosecution will agree it is the same incident as is referred to in the affidavit of Estera Wajshlum, which is No. 167.

COL. BACKHOUSE: Yes.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: The only point I was raising was that I have not taken it down in my book as against this witness.

CAPT. FIELDEN: The witness who came to the Court did not make any specific allegation against this accused, but she did make certain allegations in which she said that the S.S. personnel of Kitchen No. 1 were implicated.

THE PRESIDENT: This corroborates this affidavit; that is what you are driving at, is it?

CAPT. FIELDEN: Yes.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: What is the volume you want us to look at?

CAPT. FIELDEN: No. 7 page 7.

COL. BACKHOUSE: You really want to look at the bottom of page 6 to realise she is speaking of this man.

CAPT. FIELDEN: She is relating to kitchen No. 1?

COL. BACKHOUSE: Yes.

CAPT. FIELDEN: (To the witness): Do you remember the occasion shortly before the liberation of the camp when all the S.S. men were called on a parade?

A Yes.

Q Will you tell the Court what happened on that occasion? A. I got an order through the 'phone that all S.S. men and also those in charge of the cookhouses had to go on parade. Kommandant Kramer spoke to us and told us that we had to stay on our jobs until the British troops arrived. Then I remember that during the appel somebody came and reported to Kramer that the cookhouse No. 2 had been -- that there was some trouble there, sort of revolt, but I did not bother about it; my duty was finished so I went to my own barracks.

Q Had you locked the kitchen and taken the key with you on the parade? A. Yes.

Q To whom did you give the key at the end of the parade? A. I gave it to the second cook who worked under my command, with the Christian name Josef whom I mentioned before.

Q Did you go to the kitchen or did you go to the vicinity again that day after the end of the parade? A. No, I went to my barracks because I did not feel very well and I did not go to the kitchen until the next day.

Q I now refer to the affidavits of Jekel Gutman and Simcha Zamoski, which are respectively Nos. 30 and 179. Gutman's affidavit is merely corroborative of Zamoski. Have you ever been in charge of a bathhouse? A. No, never.

Q Have you ever been at Dora? A. I have never seen Dora.

Q I now refer to the affidavit of Stanislaw Halota -----

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: Before you go on just see if we agree on this, will you. So far as I am concerned Zamoski said nothing to the detriment of this man?

CAPT. FIELDEN: All he alleged against him was that he was at the door of the bathhouse.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: Exactly. The witness Gutman did not take it any further except to corroborate that and, therefore, all it amounts to, so far as Gutman and Zamoski are concerned, is that they both say he did certain jobs which he did not do. That is the sole accusation, is it?

CAPT. FIELDEN: Yes.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: That is what the Court have got and they will take it on that basis.

CAPT. FIELDEN: I refer now to the affidavit of Stanislaw Halota, No. 39.

(To the witness): What do you say about the allegations contained in paragraph 2 of that affidavit? A. The first thing is I never cooked for the women's compound; the second thing is the affidavit says that I killed with one bullet two persons - that is hardly possible.

Q Are the allegations contained in that paragraph true or not true? A. Untrue.

Q Are you a good shot with a pistol? A. No; I had my training at the guns but never with a pistol.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE: Where does the witness refer to the women's compound in relation to the Halota affidavit?

CAPT. FIELDEN: In the third sentence in paragraph 2. "I was in a working party which had to carry containers of soup from Pichen's kitchen to the women's camp".

THE PRESIDENT: That does not necessarily say it was a women's kitchen.

CAPT. FIELDEN: He is merely pointing out that he is making several errors apart from the fact that he was the man who was concerned, and in addition he has made a mistake about food being taken from kitchen number one to the women's camp. (To the witness) Are the allegations contained in paragraph 2 of the affidavit correct? A. No, they are not true. Three weeks before the British troops came I had not been working in cookhouse No. 1.

CAPT. FIELDEN: I think the allegations contained in paragraph 3 have already been denied by his description of what happened on the day the SS men had their parade.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

CAPT. FIELDEN: (To the witness) Did you ever carry a stick or rubber truncheon in Belsen? A. No.

Q Have you ever ill-treated prisoners? A. I never had any reason for it.

Q Have you ever shot any prisoners? A. No, I never used my pistol in Bergen-Belsen.

Q Were any of the people who have made accusations against you internees who worked in your cookhouse? A. This witness Wajsblum, but I do not know whether she had been working in my kitchen.

Q Were any of the other people who have made accusations against you internees who worked in your cookhouse? A. No.

Q Did you ever have a pass or a permit allowing you to go into the women's compound? A. No.

MAJOR WINWOOD: No questions.

MAJOR MUNRO: No questions.

MAJOR CRANFIELD: No questions.

CAPT. ROBERTS: No questions.

Cross-examined by CAPTAIN BROWN

Q Do you know the accused Mathes, number 18? A. I got to know him in prison in Celle.

Q Was he ever in cookhouse No. 1 when you were there? A. No.

Q How many cookhouses were there in the men's compound? A. Two kitchens.

Cross-examined by CAPTAIN CORBALLY

Q Do you know the accused Barsch? A. I got to know him in the hospital when I had typhus.

Q When was that? A. Between May and August 1945.

Q Was he ever an SS man in kitchen No. 1 while you were there? A. No.

Q As far as you know was he in any of the kitchens in Belsen? A. I do not know him. I think I knew fairly well all the people who were in charge of the kitchens, but during the appells I have never seen him.

CAPT. NEAVE: No questions.

CAPT. PHILLIPS: No questions.

LT. BOYD: No questions.

Cross-examined by CAPTAIN MUNRO

Q Do you know this woman ? (Indicating No.45) A. Yes.

Q Did she work in cookhouse No.1 at Belsen ? A. Yes, ~~at the~~ the last week before the arrival of the British troops.

LT. JEDRZEJOWICZ: No questions.

Cross-examined by COLONEL BACKHOUSE

Q When you were at Blechanner were you at a concentration camp or one of the prisoner of war camps ? A. When I was there for the first time I was in a P.O.W. camp.

Q And the second time ? A. The second time it was a working camp belonging to the Auschwitz area.

Q It was one of the outside camps of Auschwitz, was not it ? A. That is what I have been told, but I do not know.

Q When did you really go there for the first time ? A. On the 10th March 1943, and I stayed there until February 1944.

Q Where did you go in February 1944 ? A. Dunbrowa.

Q That was in February 1944, was it ? A. Yes.

Q When did you go back to Blechanner ? A. In July 1944.

Q You realise that is not what you told us earlier on to-day, do not you ? A. Yes, I told that I left Dunbrowa in June.

Q You said you went there in June this morning ? A. I left in February, was sent to Neustadt and directly to Dunbrowa.

Q This is all quite different to what you told us this morning, is not it ? A. It is the same.

Q This morning you told us that you went to Neustadt in March 1943 and then from Neustadt to Blechanner at the end of March 1943; is that right ? A. Yes.

Q Then you told us that you stayed at Blechanner until you went in June of 1944 to Dunbrowa; is that right ? A. No, from March 1943 until February 1944 in Blechanner.

Q Was that a Straffe camp for prisoners of war ? A. Yes.

Q What was your unit then ? A. Lagerschutz Company, Battalion No.8.

Q Who was in command ? A. Major Tischerbe.

Q How long were you at Dunbrowa ? A. Four months.

Q Then in July 1944 did you go back to Blechanner ? A. Yes.

- Q This time to the concentration camp ? A. The official name was Labour Camp not concentration camp.
- Q The official name of Belsen was Transit Camp, was it not ? A. I do not know.
- Q From July 1944 to January 1945 do you say you were a guard at Blechanner ? A. Yes.
- Q Then you went to Grossrosen ? A. Yes.
- Q When do you say you arrived at Grossrosen ? A. ~~Approximately~~ 20th February 1945.
- Q This morning you said 21st January, did you not ? A. We left Blechanner on the 21st January.
- Q Were were you in the month in between ? A. We marched from Blechanner to Grossrosen.
- Q Are you sure you did not go to Dora ? A. I did not go to Dora.
- Q Did you stop at Nordhausen ? A. I know only the camp at Grossrosen where I spent four days; that is all.
- Q Then you say you left Grossrosen with Franchio ? A. Yes.
- Q And you say you arrived at Belsen on the 10th March; is that right ? A. I do not know exactly, but I believe between the 10th and 15th March.
- Q Why did you object to doing guard duties when you were up there ? A. Because I am excused guard duties.
- Q You have done guard duties at Blechanner, have not you ? A. Yes, I did as a sort of deputy for somebody on these duties.
- Q You did guard duties at Dumbrowa, did not you ? A. We were guarding the works there at Dumbrowa and we stayed at the entrance so that anybody who was not allowed to enter should not go in.
- Q Do you really tell us that for a fortnight in March at Belsen you did nothing at all ? A. No, I did not do anything at all. I was sent to the M.O. and he stated that I am excused guard duties.
- Q Who was the M.O. you saw there ? A. I do not know.
- Q Then you went to cookhouse No.2 under Heuskel ? A. Yes.
- Q Then there is no doubt about it at all, you are the man who then became in charge of cookhouse No.1, are not you ? A. Yes.
- Q Of course, you have changed your appearance a great deal, have not you, since you were arrested ? A. I do not know; I do not think I have changed.
- Q You wore your hair pretty long while you were at Belsen, did not you ? A. Yes, I wore it very long, but in hospital when I had typhus my hair was cut off.
- Q You did not wear a moustache when you were in Belsen either, did you ? A. I believe I had one.

- Q Just look at this photograph and see if you can recognise yourself in it. (Photograph SG3 handed) A. Yes, number three from the left.
- Q Do you remember Litwinska who gave evidence ? A. Yes.
- Q She worked in your kitchen, did not she ? A. Yes.
- Q Are you surprised that she could not pick you out although she worked in your kitchen for a long time ? A. Yes, I was very much surprised she could not recognise me.
- Q Do you remember Zylberdukaten ? A. Yes.
- Q Were you surprised when she could not manage to recognise you ? A. I do not know Zylberdukaten.
- Q Were you surprised when Zamoski missed you as well ? A. He could not recognise me if he was in Dora and I myself had never been there.
- Q Never mind about Dora for a moment. Zamoski had seen you in the kitchen at Belsen, had not he ? A. I had nothing to do with the male prisoners. I had only female prisoners working in my kitchen.
- Q Who took the food away from your kitchen ? A. Five or six Russians were employed on it. They came with a handcart and fetched the food from the kitchen.
- Q Men or women ? A. Men.
- Q Of course, your kitchen was in the men's compound, was it not ? A. Yes.
- Q You told us that you know the staff of all the kitchens there. Let us just see if we can agree then. Who was in charge of kitchen No.4 ? A. It was a Scharfuhrer, I do not remember his name.
- Q Who was the other SS man with him who looked after the other shift ? A. There was only one there.
- Q Who looked after the second shift ? A. I do not know.
- Q It was immediately opposite the bath-house, was it not ? A. Yes.
- Q You are quite sure it was not Mathes and Melcher ? A. No; I knew him quite well but he hanged himself in the prison at Celle.
- Q Who worked in the SS kitchen ? A. Sturnscharfuhrer May.
- Q Do you know who worked in it before him ? A. I do not know.
- Q If you came into the kitchen from the main entrance to the camp, before you actually came into the lager, if you came down from the SS quarters or if you came down from the bath-house, the first kitchen you would come to would be kitchen No.4, would it not ? A. Yes, it is kitchen No.4 but it is still in the SS part.
- Q The first one you came to would be No.4 ? A. Yes.
- Q And the second one you came to would be the SS kitchen, would it not ? A. Yes, the SS kitchen and the canteen together in one block.
- Q That would be the second kitchen you came to, would it not ? A. Yes.

- Q In fact, if it was somebody who was counting instead of knowing the proper numbers they might very reasonably call it kitchen No.2, might they not? A. No, because everybody knew that number 1 was a kitchen for the prisoners and the second one was for the SS personnel.
- Q The SS kitchen was quite near to the main gate into the men's compound, was it not? A. No; it is some distance - about 150 to 180 metres.
- Q Did you ever eat any vegetables in the SS mess? A. Yes.
- Q Were those prepared in the SS kitchen? A. No, they were prepared in the cellar, and this cellar was in the men's compound.
- Q Then were they taken to the SS kitchen to the cook? A. Yes.
- Q Going back to your own affairs and dealing first of all with the 13th April, you were definitely in charge of kitchen No.1 then, were you not? A. Yes.
- Q Were you cooking turnips in those days? A. Yes.
- Q Did they bring turnips in in cartloads at a time and tip them outside your kitchen? A. They were always in front of the kitchen, night and day.
- Q By that time the prisoners were getting pretty hungry, were they not? A. I do not know.
- Q Do not you know? A. I do not know whether they were hungry, but I must assume that they were.
- Q They were dying of hunger all round you were not they? A. I know that many had died, but whether they had died of starvation, I could not say.
- Q You could see it for yourself, could you not? A. Yes, I have seen that they were very thin.
- Q What do you mean you do not know whether they were hungry or not? A. I do not know whether on the 13th they were already very hungry, but I assume they were.
- Q Prisoners used to hang round the kitchen, did not they, trying to get a bit of turnip or potato peel? A. They never touched anything from kitchen No.1. I have heard that they have stormed kitchen No.2, but they never took anything from my kitchen.
- Q They used to hang around the kitchen waiting for an opportunity, did not they? A. No, my kitchen was outside the compound so therefore the prisoners could not simply come and hang around my kitchen.
- Q It was on the side of the main road, was it not? A. Both kitchens were on the main road, but the compounds were separated.
- Q Both one and two kitchens were in precisely the same place so far as the compounds were concerned, they were both by the side of the main road, were they not? A. Yes.
- Q By that time they were dragging the bodies away, were they not; you had this procession of prisoners working all day dragging bodies down to the graves? A. That was in camp number 2; they did not pass kitchen number 1.

- Q I put it to you that on that day, 13th April, you shot two men who were trying to get some turnips ? A. It is not true.
- Q Do you remember a week or two before that searching a prisoner just outside the kitchen who had got some foodstuffs on him ? A. I do not remember that I had shot anybody - - -
- Q I did not say anything about shooting. I said searching ? A. The incident to which the witness refers happened three weeks before that time. -I had never been - - - -
- Q I did not ask you anything about three weeks or about shooting. What I asked you was a week or two before the British came did you in fact search the prisoners ? A. I do not remember.
- Q Have you ever searched any prisoners outside the kitchen ? A. No, I had nothing to do with that.
- Q If you have never done it why is it you cannot remember whether you did it a fortnight before the British came ? A. I have never done such things.
- Q I suggest to you that you went back to the kitchen, put the foodstuffs down, and then went out and shot the prisoner with your pistol ? A. The first thing is the pistol was locked in the cupboard, and the second thing is I was glad when I did not need to use my pistol because I had difficulties with my arm.
- Q Why did you have to use it sometimes ? A. No, never.
- Q Coming to the day of this parade, what date was it that you had this parade when Kramer sent for you all ? A. I cannot remember exactly whether it was the 13th or 14th. It was on the day when all the aufseherin returned from Neuengamme.
- Q Who did the cooking and looked after the kitchens when the aufseherin were away the day before ? A. Nobody, because they were away only for a day or two.
- Q You told us that you got a telephone message. Where did that come from ? A. From the office, and I should think from Kramer.
- Q Did that message tell you that all SS men and kitchen personnel were to report ? A. Yes.
- Q Did they all report ? A. I assumed that everybody came from No.1; both of us from No.2, and No. 3 Francioh; so I think everybody was there.
- Q Was Jenner there ? A. I do not remember. I should think yes.
- Q And the man from No.4 ? A. Yes, he was there.
- Q Cannot you remember his name now ? A. No.

- Q Did you turn all the girls out and lock the kitchen up ? A. The girls working in the kitchen waited outside the kitchen and sat in the sun.
- Q You told them to leave the kitchen did you ? A. Yes, I gave orders that they should leave the kitchen until the other man returned.
- Q Was there just one guard left on the watch tower ? A. I do not know who was in the watch tower, but I had seen Hungarian guards in the road.
- Q The witness in affidavit number 167 says: "After about half an hour Pichon and an SS Rottenfuhrer who worked in the kitchen returned. I do not know the name of the Rottenfuhrer except that his first name was Josef". Did you have a Rottenfuhrer called Josef working with you ? A. Josef was his name but he was not a Rottenfuhrer. He was simply a private.
- Q The witness says: "Many male prisoners who were starving took the opportunity of obtaining turnips which were piled up outside kitchen No. 1". They were piled up outside the kitchen were not they ? A. Yes, that is true.
- Q Can you think of a better time to try and steal the turnips than when all the SS guards had gone off on a parade ? A. That was quite impossible because in front of the kitchen, just near the piles of turnips, there was a guard on duty.
- Q Was it whilst that parade was going on that Kramer got the message to say that there was trouble at No. 2 kitchen. A. Yes.
- Q Did not you hurry back to see whether your kitchen was all right, and did not Heuskel hurry back to see if his kitchen was all right ? A. My kitchen was locked with a key, but I understand that Heuskel's kitchen was open. Into my kitchen it was impossible for them to come.
- Q But you had your pile of turnips outside, had you not ? A. But there was a guard there.
- Q Was not there a guard outside Heuskel's kitchen ? A. I do not know.
- Q I suggest to you that you and Josef came running back together and when you saw the prisoners around your cookhouse stealing the turnips you both started shooting ?
- A That is not true, because I went to my barracks and Josef could not shoot because he had a rifle, but his rifle was in his barracks. Into his kitchen he only took a bayonet.

- Q Now you remember what Litwinska said in Court, do you not ? A Yes.
- Q She said: "The man in charge of the kitchen told us, 'I am going to lock up the kitchen for an hour or so'". You were the man in charge who did the locking up, were you not ? A Yes.
- Q Then she went on: "All the S.S. men had a meeting then for a hour or an hour and a half. We were waiting in front of the kitchen". Is that true ? A No, it was not as long as that; maximum half an hour.
- Q What time was this parade called for ? A I do not know exactly, but it was about noon.
- Q If it only went on for half an hour, you would not be due off duty at the end of the parade, would you ? A Oh yes, because I started early in the morning.
- Q You told us that if you started early in the morning you were not due off parade until 1 o'clock. If this parade was at 12 and only went on for half an hour, you were not due off parade, were you ? A It might easily have been half past 12, and the whole question of a half an hour that was not so very important.
- Q Then she says: "Near the kitchen there were the remains of vegetables, potatoes and all sorts of other vegetables". That is true, is it not ? A Turnips were there, but no potatoes.
- Q Then she says: "At that moment the S.S. men returned" - not "The S.S. man" - "and started shooting" ? A I do not know. I went into my barracks and Joseph could not have shot with his bayonet.
- Q You now, I put it to you that you indulged not just once, but on more than one occasion in what had become a popular sport in Belsen, that was for the cooks to shoot prisoners who came round the cookhouse ? A No. I must repeat that I was very glad if I did not need to shoot. I have been for 18 months at the front and I have done enough shooting. If I would have preferred to do some shooting I could have volunteered to go to the front again.
- Q Yes, but somebody might have shot at you then, might they not ? A Yes, that is true, but I do not know anything about a sort of favourite sport of shooting.
- Q Who was your other aufseherin ? You have told us about Ilse Forster, or somebody has. Ilse Forster was one of them, was she not ? A Ilse Forster was one and then for a few days there was a woman called Olt and then another woman called Friederich, and I do not know what was the reason; I think they were sick because they changed over all the time.
- HARNEL**
- Q Is ~~not~~ the girl who stood up just now ? A Yes, she was working in the kitchen, but in the peeling department, where they peel potatoes.
- Q Will No. 35 stand up. (Accused Klara Opitz stands up). Was that the other girl who worked in your potato peeling department ? A No, I do not know that girl.
- Q Was No. 42, Lisiewitz ever in your kitchen ? A Yes.
- Q What was she doing ? A In the peeling shed. She was working there for a short period.
- Q Had any of the other women in the dock worked in your kitchen ? A Only Ilse Forster and the two in the peeling shed; nobody else.
- Q Just Ilse Forster in the kitchen and the other two in the peeling shed; is that right ? A Yes.

Q You know they behaved very badly in the kitchen, did they not, to the prisoners ? A I cannot say, because of the short period I have been in charge of the kitchen.

Q Do you remember a young Rottenfuhrer who worked in that kitchen who went to complain to Muller that he could not stand the beating and stealing in the kitchen ? A I cannot remember.

Q We are talking of the right kitchen, are we not, ~~it is the one~~ Litwinska worked it ? A Yes.

Q Did you never see Ilse Forster beating Litwinska ? A I cannot remember.

COLONEL BACKHOUSE: Well, if you cannot remember I will not ask you any more about it.

CAPTAIN FIELDEN: No re-examination.

(The accused leaves the place from which he has given his evidence).

CAPTAIN FIELDEN: My next accused is Walter Otto and I will call him now.

THE ACCUSED, WALTER OTTO, takes his stand at the place from which the other witnesses have given their evidence and having been duly sworn is examined by CAPTAIN FIELDEN as follows:

Q What is your full name ? A Walter Otto.

Q When and where were you born ? A On the 20th July, 1906 in Wuppertal.

Q Is that in the Rhineland ? A Yes.

Q What is your nationality ? A German.

Q What was your civilian occupation ? A Electrician.

Q When did you first join the German forces ? A In the end of September I was called and I had to report on the 15th October, 1940, in Berlin, Oranienburg.

Q Were you then conscripted into the S.S. ? A Yes.

Q When did you first arrive at Belsen ? A On Sunday, 4th February, 1945.

Q Will you tell the Court what work you did first at Belsen ? A We arrived on Sunday and then the offices were closed, so we reported again on Monday and we saw Hauptscharfuhrer Steinmetz and he appointed us to do work as electricians. We started our job on Tuesday.

Q What work did you do ? A We made the electric installations and did repair works in new blocks and on the lager main street.

Q Were you put in charge of an electrician's commando ? A Yes, on Tuesday we told the lageraltester to get hold of all the electricians amongst the prisoners. We gave them a test and at last we had a kommando of about 17 or 18 electricians.

CAPTAIN FIELDEN: I will refer the witness to the accusations against him, which in the affidavit of Stojowska, on page 149 and 150. (To the witness): Have you read paragraph 4 of the affidavit on page 129 ? A Yes.

Q What do you say to that ? A This is about block 213 in the women's compound. This compound was closed and I could not enter it without the

permit of the doctor. Furthermore I have never been a blockfuhrer because it was not possible for somebody working in administration to be a blockfuhrer.

Q Have you ever been to block 213 or in its immediate vicinity ? A No, only in the beginning of March I went with Dr. Horstmann to block 209 to make that dentist's place.

Q I want to refer you to paragraph 5 of the same affidavit. What do you say about that ? A About the 10th or the 11th March, after we had fixed up the dentist's place, we had been in blocks 195 to 203. We were in the front part of the camp and we had to do some repair work. In this block 201 was a Polish woman, blockaltester called Aldona. I have never seen a blockaltester who was a Jewess there.

Q Have you ever beaten anyone at Belsen ? A No.

Q Have you ever done anything to help the internees at Belsen ?

A Yes. After we had our electrician kommando with always the same 18 people, Hauptscharfuhrer Steinmetz and I saw to it that they received new shoes, two new sets of underwear and a new suit. Then we asked the witness who has been here, Dr. Bendel to come and look at our kommando. He came

two or three times a week and said that they were rather weak. Then we went to Vogler, who was in charge of the administration, and asked for more food, and as the result of that we received every day a double ration from kitchen.

No. 4. As this was not sufficient we went to the lageraltester Hanka and we saw to it that we received for our kommando every week twice ten extra loaves of bread, a kilogramme of margarine, some marmalade and sometimes some tinned meat. Furthermore, in the second week of the kommando we got

1,200 cigarettes for them. Afterwards we had more cigarettos and when

we could not receive cigarettes we had pipe tobacco. We had always

something to smoke.

Q. Was it any part of your work to concern yourself with the beds in the women's lager? A. No.

CAPT. FIELDEN: That completes my examination.

MAJOR WINWOOD: No questions.

MAJOR MUNRO: No questions.

MAJOR CRANFIELD: No questions, and Capt. Roberts has no questions.

Cross-examined by CAPT. BROWN.

CAPT. BROWN: My questions relate to the accused No. 18, Mathes. (To the witness) Did you do the electrical repair work in the bathhouse? A. Yes.

Q. Can you tell the court approximately what date that was? A. It happened several times.

Q. Can you tell the court when the last date was? A. On the 6th April. It was a Friday I know, because on Friday our whole kommando was bathed, and it happened then when we were there for the last time.

Q. Do you know who was in charge of the bathhouse then? A. Mathes was present, I had been talking with him; and two men, members of the wehrmacht, but I do not know them.

CAPT. CORBALLY: No questions.

CAPT. MELVE: No questions.

CAPT. PHILLIPS: No questions.

LT. BOYD: No questions.

CAPT. MUNRO: No questions.

LT. JEDRZEJOWICZ: No questions.

THE PRESIDENT: I am not sure I have that answer right. The 6th April was the last time he had been in the bathhouse because the whole kommando was bathed there?

CAPT. BROWN: Yes, on that date.

Cross-examined by COL. BACKHOUSE.

Q. Do you say you were conscripted into the S.S. in October 1940? A. Yes.

Q. Is not it true that you were conscripted to the army and volunteered for the S.S.? A. No.

Q. The S.S. was still pretty difficult to get into in 1940, was not it?

A. I received an order to go to Berlin, Oranienburg, to the S.S.

Q. Were not you called up first in your own recruiting area? A. No.

Q. We have got about four and a half years gap from October 1940 to 1945. What happened when you got to Oranienburg? Where did you go to after that?

A. We arrived in the afternoon and in the evening 100 of us were sent to Auschwitz.

Q. How long did you stay at Auschwitz? A. Until 21st January 1945.

Q. You must have been one of the people who was at Auschwitz longer than anybody else, were not you? A. I do not know.

Q. The place was only really built in 1940, was not it? A. When we arrived part of the camp was there already.

PURL: <https://www.legal-tools.org/doc/6c71f9/>

- Q. You really watched it grow and helped it along, did not you? A. Yes.
- Q. What was your employment there? A. I was an electrician. I had my training first and then my work was an electrician.
- Q. Who was in charge of the electrical work there? A. After a year of training in the company I came into the electrical department in May 1942. Oberscharfuhrer Bohn was in charge of that department.
- Q. You had a full year, in fact rather more than a year, as an ordinary S.S. man first in the camp, did you? A. Yes, more than a year.
- Q. Which part of the camp were you employed in? A. Auschwitz No.1.
- Q. Because when you first went there it was all one, was not it? It had not grown into Auschwitz No.1 and No.2? A. Yes, only one.
- Q. Were you doing electrical work when they were building the other one? A. No, I have been working in Auschwitz No.1.
- Q. When you left Auschwitz where did you go to first? A. First we went to Dunskirchen, Pless.
- Q. How were you travelling - by car, by train, by bicycle, walking or what? A. We travelled by car.
- Q. Were you in this convey of about ten vehicles we heard about? A. I travelled alone in a food truck.
- Q. And did you go on directly until you got to Belson? I mean, call in somewhere for the night, obviously, but did you gradually go straight to Belson? A. We went from Dunskirchen to Grossrosen, stayed there for a day and a half. Then we went to Oranienburg.
- Q. Did you see anything of Francish (No.16) or Pinchen on your way? A. No.
- Q. Or Mathes? A. No.
- Q. You have told us you were turned into an electrician again when you got to Belson, and you have told us all about getting this food for your kommando. Food could be obtained all right then if anybody wanted it? A. Yes, as far as I know it was possible.
- Q. Provided an S.S. man took sufficient trouble he could get both bread and margarine for his kommando? A. Yes, I did get it from the lageraltester.
- Q. And the lageraltester could produce it if you asked for it? A. Well, he was the chief prisoner in the camp and he had a sort of an extra supply for the working parties, not only my kommando got extra food but other working parties as well.
- Q. Was the position that people who were fit to work got food and people who were sick and unfit to work were allowed to starve? A. I cannot tell.
- Q. Literally thousands of people did starve to death there, did not they? A. Yes.
- Q. But your kommando got fed all right? A. Yes.
- Q. And the other working kommandos? A. I have seen several working parties at kitchen 4 who received this extra food supply.
- Q. Is that why kitchen No.4 was kept outside in the S.S. part? A. Yes, it was opposite the S.S. kitchen.
- Q. Is not the truth of the matter that food was produced for people fit to work and no food produced for those who were not? A. I do not know; I can only say that I received food for my kommando.
- Q. Who was in charge of kitchen No.4? A. Scharfuhrer Geissler.
- Q. And who were the aufseherin in that kitchen? A. I do not know the names of the aufseherin, but the second cook was Sturmbann Pohl.
- Q. And who was in the S.S. kitchen when you were there? Was Mathes still there? A. There was Sturmscharfuhrer May and another chap with the Christian name of Erich, but I do not know his surname.

- Q You told us the last time you went into the bathhouse was on the 6th of April? A. Yes.
- Q When did the electricity fail? A. On the 12th or 13th April.
- Q After that there was no water supply, was there? A. No, there was no water.
- Q Was everybody very busy then? A. We had enough to do.
- Q A very large proportion of the S.S. had gone away, had not they? A. I do not know how many went but I went to Neuene Gamme and when I came back a large part of the S.S. and the Wehrmacht had gone.
- Q And the rest of the party, the ones who were left, had a tremendous lot on their hands, had not they? A. Yes, we had quite a lot of work to do because we lost two men and only Steinmetz and I were left to do the job.
- Q I am not talking only of electrical work; everybody in the camp was hard pressed with the amount of work, were not they? A. Yes, I think so because there was quite a lot of work to do.
- Q The camp was in an absolutely dreadful condition, was not it? A. I had already been working on the main street and I cannot say that conditions were very bad there.
- Q There was only a wire fence between the main street and the camps on either side, was not there? A. Yes, but we had only to do with electrical things; we had nothing to do with the barbed wire because that was not electrically loaded.
- Q There were 13,000 bodies lying about the camp, were not there, unburied; did not you notice anything about that? A. When I arrived in March we worked on the electrical installation of the main street and after that until the British troops came we did work in the front part of the camp and there were no bodies.
- Q Did you never hear any gossip about it in the S.S. quarters? A. I have not been living in the S.S. quarters; four of us were living in the first hut in the front part of the camp.
- Q So that it must have come as an awful shock to you when the British showed you the state of the camp, did it? A. I have seen the camp for the first time when we had to carry bodies.
- Q And you had been there from January onwards, or February onwards, and had never realised that people were dying all round you in this way? A. That was not my job, we had -----
- Q That was not what I asked you; I asked you whether you had ever noticed it?
A Yes, I knew that.
- Q When an S.S. man was working about the camp if he saw anything that he thought was wrong he interfered, did not he? A. For my part, yes, I did; I do not know what others did.
- Q I suggest to you that when you saw this woman Starowska with a bed you thought she was taking it without permission and so that is when you interfered although it had nothing particular to do with you? A. I had nothing to do with that and at that time I was not allowed to enter the camp, and there were two S.S. men on guard.
- Q What time are you talking of? A. The same period you are talking about concerned with that bed.

- Q What period was that? A. I came for the first time in the camp in the middle of March; in the affidavit January is mentioned and I was not there then.
- Q That is why I was asking you what period you are talking about because the affidavit says January and I wanted to know what period you were talking about when you said you could not go in because there were two S.S. guards on the gate? A. Yes, I was talking about the middle of March because we had to find the people for our kommando first and then we had to find a workshop so we started our work in the beginning of March.
- Q Do not worry about March at all; let us talk about the ~~time~~ when you first arrived in Belsen which you put as the beginning of February. A. On the 4th February.
- Q Do you mean to say you never went to look around the camp you had come to? A. We had no time for that because on the 6th we started selecting our electricians; we had to prepare our workshop and then we had to select more people so we had quite a lot of work to do.
- Q And never once had a look round the camp to see what sort of an electrical installation you had taken over? A. No; in that camp there were two electricians who did the repair work.
- Q I suggest to you you saw this girl with a bed and in the normal and typical S.S. manner you promptly beat her first and asked her what she was doing with it afterwards? A. I can only say I never beat anybody; I had never anything to do with any prisoners than my own 17 who were on the job.
- Q You do remember being in Block 201, do not you? A. Yes.
- Q Was that block divided into two parts each with its own block altester? (The gives an answer in German) Do you mind if you answer my question and that is, first of all, was the block divided into two parts? A. I do not know.
- CAPT. FIELDEN: Can we have the answer which the accused gave?
- COL. BACKHOUSE: As it had nothing to do with the question I wanted him to answer my question first. (To the witness): Was the block divided into two parts? A. I do not know.
- Q Were there two block altesters? A. I only saw one.
- THE PRESIDENT: What was that other answer?
- THE INTERPRETER: "I have only been in one room, the first to the left of the entrance. I asked the people there what was wrong and they told me a lamp was not burning in the second room there. I gave them a new lamp. I had been talking to the block altester, Aldona; I knew her from Auschwitz.
- COL. BACKHOUSE: What was her nationality? A. A Polish woman.
- Q When you were in that block did you see any bed there? A. Not in that room.
- Q Did you look in the other room? A. Yes, we have been in the other rooms and there were three tier bunks.
- Q Did you see a bed in either of the rooms? A. No.
- Q What I am suggesting to you is that whilst you were doing this repair work you saw a bed in there and you beat the woman who had the bed? A. That is not true.

Q Whilst you were wandering round this camp doing your electrical repairs did you see quite a lot of beating going on? A. Now and then, yes.

Q Was that by both the S.S. and the kapos? A. It was more by kapos than by S.S.

Q Did the S.S. make any attempt to stop the kapos? A. I cannot tell.

Q Did you? A. No.

CAPT. FIELDEN: No re-examination.

THE PRESIDENT: This kommando that you formed, this kommando of electricians, what sort of people were they? What nationality? A. One Russian, four Poles and the others were Jews.

Q When were you yourself arrested? A. On the 17th April at about 1300 hours.

Q Had you seen any of your original kommando in the camp after the British came? A. Yes. May I add something?

Q Yes. A. When we came back from carrying the corpses we were allowed to rest near the barbed wire and these people of my electrical kommando were looking at us.

Q Did you talk to them then? A. No, we were not allowed to.

THE PRESIDENT: Have you any questions on that?

CAPT. FIELDEN: No.

(At 1716 hours the Court is adjourned
until 0930 hours Tuesday 23rd October,
1945.)

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